



# HEAVY VEHICLE SERVICING

## INFORMATION

February 2018

## SAFETY ALERT

### TOWING CONNECTIONS CERTIFIED BY PETER WASTNEY ENGINEERING LIMITED

This safety alert has been issued by the NZ Transport Agency following the identification of failures in towing connections involving drawbeams and drawbars certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd.

Several recent failures have been identified in both drawbeams and drawbars certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd. Independent reviews of those drawbeams and drawbars have identified that they were not adequately designed for the loads to which they had been certified.

**The Transport Agency is urgently requiring all operators with drawbeams, drawbars, or towbars certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd to have them cleaned and inspected for signs of cracks or other failures. If any signs are found, the vehicles' use as a combination vehicle must be discontinued immediately.**

Cracks and other failures generally develop from cyclic loading and they may not present themselves until after the vehicle has been in service for several hundred thousand kilometres. However, in some designs cracks may develop in a much shorter timeframe.

The Transport Agency will require that all towing connections certified to NZS5446/NZS5467 by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd, whether signs of failure are present or not, be assessed and new certification issued within a reasonable time by a heavy vehicle specialist certifier (HVSC) with the HVET category.

Further information is being sent directly to affected vehicle owners.



After several months in service, cracks developed where the main body of the drawbeam attached to its side plates, resulting in the trailer's detachment from the towing vehicle.



Crack identified on trailer's drawbar after approximately 2 years in service.

While the focus of this alert is primarily on towing connections, an inspection of all certifications (eg log bolsters, crane attachments, load anchors, chassis modifications, etc.) by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd is also recommended in addition to the usual walk-around inspection. If any failures are identified, please contact the Transport Agency (see green box below).

### Action required

- Review your fleet and determine if Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd was the company that provided certification of any drawbeams, drawbars, or towbars.
- If so, it is essential that these towing connections are thoroughly cleaned and carefully inspected for signs of cracks or failure, paying particular attention around any welded or bolted areas.
- If any signs of cracks or other failure are present on the towing connections, the vehicles' use as a combination vehicle must be discontinued until the components have been replaced with certified components.
- Do not attempt to repair any cracks, as this won't address the root cause of the failure.
- Even if no cracks or failures are evident, all certifications to NZS5446/NZS5467 (drawbeams, drawbars, or towbars) by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd must be reassessed by a specialist certifier within a reasonable timeframe.
- Feedback regarding cracks or other failures on towing connections or any other components certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Ltd and all other enquiries or questions related to this should be directed to the Transport Agency on 0800 699 000.

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# Questions and answers: Safety alert: Towing connections certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited

NZ Transport Agency

February 2018

## **Q) I've had no issues with my drawbeam/towbar/drawbar certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited. Why do I need to replace it now?**

A) The Transport Agency has investigated the failures of both drawbeams and drawbars and has enough reason to believe that the designs in general are significantly deficient to justify a reassessment to replace or re-certify.

## **Q) How long has the Transport Agency known about the problems with drawbeams/towbars/drawbars certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited**

A) The Transport Agency was made aware of an on-road failure in late 2017 and oversaw a design review to determine the root cause of that failure. The most recent failure was reported in February 2018.

## **Q) I have a drawbeam/towbar/drawbar on my truck/trailer. How soon do I need to have it replaced?**

A) The Transport Agency requires a visual inspection to check for any signs of failure. If none are found, the Transport Agency recommends replacing or recertifying it (which may involve re-strengthening) as soon as possible. If that isn't possible (due to time/labour/etc. constraints), we recommend daily inspections of the drawbeam/towbar/drawbar until such time as it can be replaced. However, replacement and or strengthening should be finalised within 6 months.

## **Q) The certification on the drawbeam/towbar/drawbar on my truck/trailer still has some years left before it expires. Who is going to pay for a new one?**

A) The Transport Agency recognises that there will be cost in replacing/recertifying the drawbeam/towbar/drawbar but have determined that minimising the risk to safety outweighs the cost. We recommend contacting Peter Wastney Engineering Limited to discuss any subsequent reimbursement of costs.

## **Q) I have a component (eg log bolster, fifth wheel, skid plate, crane mount, etc.) certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited and it has cracks. What should I do?**

A) The Transport Agency recommends that you stop using the vehicle, or, at a minimum, stop using the component in the meantime. You should document the failure as much as possible, including the vehicle's registration, certification (LT400) number, photos, date of certification, etc. and send it to [info@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:info@nzta.govt.nz) with *Peter Wastney Engineering Limited* and your registration number in the subject line. Then arrange for the component to be replaced or recertified by a heavy vehicle specialist certifier.

A list of heavy vehicle specialist certifiers (HVSCs) is available on our website. For towing connections, find one in your area that has 'HVET' authorisation. The direct link to the list is here: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/heavy-vehicle-specialist-certifiers/docs/heavy-vehicle-specialist-certifiers-list.pdf>

Alternatively, liaise with the engineering workshop you normally use, who will have a certifier they can use.

## **Q) My CoF is about to expire. Will I pass a CoF inspection if I have a drawbeam/towbar/drawbar certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited on my truck/trailer?**

A) If there are no visual faults, the Transport Agency is requiring replacement and/or recertification at your earliest convenience. There is nothing to stop you from getting a new CoF but if the drawbeam/towbar/drawbar certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited on your truck/trailer isn't replaced/re-certified within a reasonable time, getting a subsequent CoF may be contingent on getting a new or recertified drawbeam/towbar/drawbar.

## **Q) Who can I get to recertify or replace the draw beam/tow bar/drawbar on my truck/trailer?**

A) A list of heavy vehicle specialist certifiers (HVSCs) is available on our website. For towing connections, find one in your area that has 'HVET' authorisation. The direct link to the list is here: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/heavy-vehicle-specialist-certifiers/docs/heavy-vehicle-specialist-certifiers-list.pdf>

Alternatively, liaise with the engineering workshop you normally use, who will have a certifier they can use.

## **Q) I can't locate any damage even though Peter Wastney Engineering Limited completed the work? Can I still use my truck and trailer?**

A) Yes, you can still use your truck/trailer but we recommend that you continue with a thorough inspection, in addition to your normal walk-around, until your towing connections can be recertified or replaced.

## **Q) Who will reimburse my loss of income for when my truck and/or trailer is/are off the road?**

A) If no cracks or other failures are found, we recommend you schedule time with a heavy vehicle specialist certifier that coincides with routine, scheduled maintenance to avoid any additional loss of income. If cracks or other failures are found, we recommend you arrange for the component to be replaced or recertified by a heavy vehicle specialist certifier. We recommend contacting Peter Wastney Engineering Limited to discuss any costs including loss of income.

## **Q) What if I do nothing?**

A) The Transport Agency highly recommends a thorough cleaning and inspection of the towing components. Doing nothing is not advisable and may result in the inability to obtain a CoF in the future or cause a crash from your trailer separating.

## **Q) Is it only work completed on drawbeams/towbars/drawbars that we need to be concerned about?**

A) At this time, the Transport Agency has identified towing connections on trucks and trailers as the highest area of concern. If you have other work certified by Peter Wastney Engineering Limited, we also recommend you inspect and monitor it for any signs of failures.

## **Q) Who can I contact at the Transport Agency to discuss this further?**

A) If you would like to discuss this further, we recommend you follow up with an email to [info@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:info@nzta.govt.nz) with *Peter Wastney Engineering Limited* and your registration number in the subject line.